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Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 22 March 2018

37/14. Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, adopted by consensus by the General Assembly by its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992,

Taking into consideration article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other relevant existing international standards and national legislation,

Recalling all previous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Recalling also the paragraphs in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action relating to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, of which the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development is an integral part, recalling that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets seek to realize the human rights of all, and stressing the need for Member States to integrate the 2030 Agenda into their respective national policies and development frameworks, as appropriate, to promote the effective implementation of, follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda, in order to ensure that no one is left behind,

Reaffirming that youth participation is important for development, and encouraging Member States to explore and promote the participation of young people in relevant decision-making processes and monitoring, including in designing and implementing policies and programmes involving them, while implementing the 2030 Agenda,

Welcoming the adoption of initiatives by the United Nations system, including the proclamation of the year beginning 1 January 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages and International Mother Language Day to draw attention to the critical loss of languages, and recognizing the urgent need to promote the preservation and protection of all languages, including as an educational medium, and to take further urgent steps to that end at the national and international levels,

Taking note of the publication of the handbook entitled "Language Rights of Linguistic Minorities: A Practical Guide for Implementation",

Emphasizing the need to strengthen efforts to meet the goal of the full realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including by addressing their economic and social conditions and marginalization, and to end any type of discrimination against them,

Emphasizing also the importance of recognizing and addressing multiple, aggravated and intersecting forms of discrimination against persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and the compounded negative impact on the enjoyment of their rights,

Recognizing that young women and girls belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities may often face particular challenges, and underlining in this context the importance of taking a gender-sensitive approach when considering measures to promote and protect the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities,

Emphasizing the fundamental importance of human rights education, training and learning, dialogue, including intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and interaction among all relevant stakeholders and members of society relating to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities as an integral part of the development of society as a whole, including through the sharing of best practices relating to, inter alia, the promotion of mutual understanding of minority issues, the management of diversity through the recognition of plural identities and the promotion of inclusive and stable societies and of social cohesion therein,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues submitted to the Human Rights Council at its current session,[1] his report on the recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues at its tenth session[2] and the report to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;[3]

2. *Notes* the completion, in December 2017, of the tenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues, addressing the rights of minority youth, which, through the widespread participation of stakeholders, provided an important platform for promoting dialogue on this topic, and encourages States to take into consideration the relevant recommendations of the Forum;

3. *Takes note* of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;[4]

4. *Commends* the Special Rapporteur on minority issues for his work and for the important role that he has played in raising the level of awareness of and in giving added visibility to the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and for his guiding role in the preparation and work of the Forum on Minority Issues, which contributes to efforts to improve cooperation among all United Nations mechanisms relating to the rights of persons belonging to minorities;

[1] A/HRC/37/66.
[2] A/HRC/37/73.
[3] A/72/165.
[4] A/HRC/25/30.

5. *Calls upon* States to undertake initiatives to ensure that persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are aware of and able to exercise their rights as set out in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and in other international human rights obligations and commitments, and recommends that all measures taken with a view to implementing the Declaration be, to the fullest extent possible, developed, designed, implemented and reviewed with the full, effective and equal participation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

6. *Urges* States, while bearing in mind the theme of the tenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues, and with a view to enhancing the implementation of the Declaration and to ensuring the realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including minority youth, to take appropriate measures by, inter alia:

(a) Taking legislative, policy or practical measures to ensure that minority youth have equal access to education of equal quality, delivered in an inclusive environment that fosters greater achievement for all;

(b) Providing, wherever possible, minority youth with adequate opportunities to learn their own language or to have instruction in their own language, while ensuring that minorities also receive instruction in official languages;

(c) Refraining from adopting policies or education strategies segregating students into different educational institutions or classes based on their minority status;

(d) Reviewing any legislation, policy or practice that has a discriminatory or disproportionately negative effect on minority youth, bearing in mind that the full enjoyment of human rights by young persons empowers them to contribute as active members of society to the political, civil, economic, social and cultural development of their country;

(e) Promoting the representation of minority youth in decision-making processes at the local, national and international levels, especially processes concerning youth and minority policies;

(f) Also promoting the adequate representation of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including minority youth where applicable, in national and local institutions, including municipalities, schools and police forces;

(g) Ensuring the full and effective participation of minority youth in economic life, as appropriate, without discrimination based on language, religion or ethnicity, including by developing training and professional orientation programmes and ensuring that such programmes are made available in minority languages;

(h) Supporting activities that can help to develop a spirit of community, including efforts to engage minority youth through sport and culture;

(i) Ensuring protection of minorities, including minority youth, on an equal basis with all other civilians, taking into account their specific vulnerabilities during and after conflict;

(j) Enabling intercultural and interreligious dialogue among youth for the recognition and promotion of and respect for diversity, including as a critical tool for fostering mutual understanding, the promotion of peace, sustainable development, peaceful coexistence, conflict prevention, reconciliation processes and mutual understanding in post-conflict societies;

(k) Facilitating the participation, as appropriate, of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, including mino ity youth, in the design, establishment and implementation of comprehensive transitional justice strategies;

(l) Countering any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, including on the Internet, and adopting and implementing measures to criminalize incitement to imminent violence based

on nationality, race, religion or belief, while respecting all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(m) Promoting cultural diversity, inclusion, education and tolerance, inter alia, by encouraging, on a voluntary basis, complementary efforts by media and digital media actors to disseminate information about the rights of all persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and to give voice to their concerns and views;

7. *Invites* international and regional organizations to continue to pay attention to the situations and rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, and in this regard to take into consideration relevant recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues;

8. *Welcomes* the inter-agency cooperation among United Nations agencies, funds and programmes on minority issues, led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and urges them to further increase their coordination and cooperation by, inter alia, developing policies on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, drawing also on relevant outcomes of the Forum and taking into account the work of relevant regional organizations;

9. *Notes in particular* in this regard the initiatives and activities of the United Nations network on racial discrimination and the protection of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, coordinated by the Office of the High Commissioner and aimed at enhancing dialogue and cooperation between relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and invites the network to continue to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and to consult and engage with persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and civil society actors;

10. *Requests* the High Commissioner to continue to present an annual report to the Human Rights Council containing information on relevant developments of United Nations human rights bodies and mechanisms, and on the activities undertaken by the Office of the High Commissioner at headquarters and in the field that contribute to the promotion of and respect for the provisions of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to continue to provide all the human, technical and financial assistance necessary for the effective fulfilment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and for the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner in the area of rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

12. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this issue in accordance with its programme of work.

53rd meeting
22 March 2018

[Adopted without a vote.]